

The translation of *ittahāza awliya* and the rights of non-Muslims as leaders in Indonesia



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This research aimed to show the political stance of the Muslim majority represented by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia (MoRA RI) towards non-Muslim leadership through the translation of the Qur'an. It examined the differences in the translation of the Qur'an based on the theory of translation as a political act. A total of 19 phrases or collocated words *ittahāza awliya* were found in the corpus of the Qur'an. The researchers approached the study with a critical discourse analysis approach, and conducted contrastive analysis on translations of these collocated words in four editions of translations of the Qur'an published officially by MoRA RI from 1965 to 2019. The results proved that interference in translation of the collocation *ittahāza awliya* is caused by the influence of the source text, and that the political situation and ideology influenced the translation of the Qur'an in Indonesia. The political direction of the Indonesian government, especially MoRA RI, tended to provide more opportunities for non-Muslims to become leaders today, as seen in the 2019 edition. While the translation edition published before tended to close the possibility of non-Muslims becoming leaders. This finding shows the government's stance on democracy for non-Muslims, which according to previous research findings has declined with the rise of Islamic populism in Indonesia.

Contribution: This article provides an explanation of one side of the difficulty of translating collocation [*ittahāza awliya*] in the Qur'an and at the same time shows the political direction of the government of the Republic of Indonesia regarding the politics of non-Muslim leadership.

Keywords: Qur'an; translation; collocation; leadership; non-Muslims; Indonesia.

Introduction

Opposition to leadership from religious minorities still occurs in many countries, including non-Muslim minorities in Indonesia (Esposito 1990; Rodin 2017; Silvita 2012; Sohrabi 2016). The rejection of the non-Muslim Ahok of Chinese descent as a candidate for Jakarta governor occurred dramatically when he commented on the Qur'an in late 2016. Ahok's comment led to anti-Ahok protest and calls for his arrest because he was deemed to have committed blasphemy (Hatherell & Welsh 2017). Sahiron Syamsuddin, chairman of the Association for Tafsir Science in Indonesia, who became part of Ahok's expert team stated that his comment about the Qur'an (al-Maidah: 51) was not a blasphemy against Islam or al-Quran (Pruwanto 2017). At that time, Ahok's rival received a lot of support from Islamist groups (Hatherell & Welsh 2017; Miichi 2019). Mujani (2019) considered the anti-Ahok protests in the gubernatorial election that continued until early 2017 as a compelling indicator of the strained political and religious relations in Indonesia.

The anti-Ahok protest was related to the controversy surrounding the Quranic verse, namely QS. al-Maidah: 51, which is understood as a prohibition against electing non-Muslim leaders (Mujani 2019, 2020; Nuryanti 2021). Ahok's political opponents use this verse as it prohibits Muslims from electing non-Muslim leaders. At the same time, Ahok considered the use of QS. al-Maidah: 51 as a campaign medium just a political act to keep him from being elected in the gubernatorial election (Huda 2019; Keane 2018). In the verse, there is the phrase *ittahāza awliya*, which is interpreted differently. The word *awliya* (Arabic) is translated with several different words, namely helper, supporter, close associate, sponsor, friend, benefactor, protector, legal guardian and so on (Huda 2019). In addition, the translation of the phrase collocation – as the phrase *ittahāza awliya* in QS. al-Maidah: 51 – often causes problems. Newmark (1988) provides an analogy in which he likens a text to the human body. In this comparison, grammar is considered the skeleton of the text, and lexis represents its flesh. Furthermore, collocation is likened to the nervous system within the body of the text. Collocation is more subtle and specific in showing meaning. Another thing to note is to consider the range of collocation so that its lexical meaning can be received from each word. This

Note: Special collection: Historical Thought and Source Interpretation.

note applies to quality adjectives and verbs that express an activity (Newmark 1988). According to Newmark (1998), collocation translation often needs to be improved from the perspective of translation studies. From the perspective of lexical meaning, collocation also often raises problems, both intralingual problems (the identification and determination of collocation) and interlingual problems (problems that arise in translating with the same collocation in the target language) (Bahumaid 2006). Baker (2018) mentions several difficulties and problems in translating collocation, such as lexical meaning problems, Arabic culture, religious connotations and idiomatic meaning of several combinations of words (Faris & Sahu 2013; Obeidat & Mahadi 2020).

In the perception of Muslim scholars, the translation of the Qur'an indeed does not hold the same status as the original Quranic text; therefore, it does not attain the same position as the original text (Blumczynski & Israel 2018; Halimah 2014). However, Quranic translations in Indonesia hold a significant position in the discourse of Islam among Indonesian Muslim communities, where Arabic is not their native language (Adib 2018; Ministry of Religious Affairs [MoRA] 2019). From 1965 to 2019, MoRA RI, as the official authority responsible for Quranic translation in Indonesia, issued four editions of the Qur'an translation (Daneshgar, Riddell & Rippin 2016; Faizin 2011; Rodin et al. 2021). In the context of the predominantly Muslim population in Indonesia, the Qur'an is often used as a tool to seek support for specific political stances because it is believed to be their guiding principle in life (Fadl 2014; Minan & Afifi 2020; Nasr et al. 2015; Zakariya 2018). According to Rodin et al. (2021), aside from fulfilling the Muslim community's need for the Qur'an, Quranic translations in the Indonesian language also represent a political stance that reflects the political policies of each regime in Indonesia. Nusantara Muslim scholars who translate the Qur'an are influenced by their background of thought, history and political perspectives (Hussin & Kamal 2021).

This research not only aims to uncover the translation problems related to the collocation *ittahaḥa awliya* but also intends to reveal the political stance and policies of the Indonesian government concerning the political rights of non-Muslims to become leaders in Indonesia, which have recently been perceived as regressing. This will be accomplished by analysing the differences in the Qur'an translations issued by MoRA, particularly in the translation of the collocation *ittahaḥa awliya*. Building upon the theory that translation is a political activity or, at the very least, carries political implications (Alvares & Vidal 1996; Cassin 2018; Hatfield 2012). The researchers investigated the translation of this phrase in Indonesian translations of the Qur'an issued by MoRA and subsequently analysed it through a contrastive analysis. The religious perspective of MoRA represents the religious stance of the Government of the Republic of Indonesia. From the era of the old order (Soekarno's regime) until the present, the Indonesian government has published four official editions of the Qur'an translation (Rodin et al. 2021).

Research methods and design

The approach employed in this research is Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which emphasises the relationship between ideology, text and power while also highlighting the function of language use within its social and political context (Fairclough 1993, 1997; Zhang & Munday 2018). This research explores the relationship among MoRA, the authority in religious affairs in Indonesia, the translated versions of the Qur'an in Indonesian published by MoRA and the ideologies of ruling regimes in Indonesia. It covers the period from the old order (Soekarno's regime), the new order (Soeharto's regime) and the reform era up to the present day. The focus is on the translations of the Qur'an from four editions: 1965, 1990, 2002 and 2019.

Politics and translation become the theme of this research because the latest edition of MoRA's Qur'an translation was published after Ahok's rejection as Jakarta's gubernatorial candidate. In addition, theoretically, there is a close relationship between politics and translation (Alvares & Vidal 1996). The texts examined in this research consist of the Quranic text and its translation into Indonesian language, with a specific focus on QS. al-Maidah: 51 and verses containing the collocation phrase *ittahaḥa awliya* and its inflection found within the Quranic corpus by way of detailed reading. This focus is because those collocation phrases have triggered massive demonstrations in Indonesia and because translating collocations is a translation problem in itself (Newmark 1988). Below is the collocation of the phrase in QS Al-Maidah: 51:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا لَا تَتَّخِذُوا الْيَهُودَ وَالنَّصَارَىٰ أَوْلِيَاءَ

[O you who have believed, do not take the Jews and the Christians as *wali*] (QS. Al-Maidah: 51).

There are various definitions of collocation, but the linguists generally emphasise three things: definitions that emphasise the structure of collocation or the relationships between the unit of words that make up the collocation; a definition that emphasises juxtaposition, the relationship of two words in a particular order and definitions that emphasise the lexical semantics of the word combinations that make up that collocation (Husinec & Bilić 2021). In this research, collocation refers to the combination of words that have an idiomatic semantic relationship based on frequent co-occurrence (Bussmann 2006). This collocation is also referred to as idiomatic collocation, which shares characteristics similar to marked collocation, such as unusual combinations, beyond the expectations of the listener or reader, aimed at creating a new representation, having a specific meaning or conveying figurative imagery and rhetorical purposes (Baker 2018). Thus, the material object of this research consists of the phrase *ittahaḥa awliya* and its translation in the official Indonesian Qur'an translations.

Researchers found 19 *ittahaḥa awliya* phrases in the Qur'an corpus, and these phrases [*ittahaḥa* and *awliya*] are consistently found to be collocated words. These are 7 times in the form of

prohibition sentences and 12 times in declarative sentences that functioned pragmatically to prohibit or called illocutionary sentences in the perspective of speech actions. The collocation is spread over 13 chapters of the Qur'an.

Subsequently, the researchers conducted a contrastive analysis of the translation of the collocation phrase *ittahāza awliya* in the four editions of the Indonesian translations of the Qur'an. Contrastive analysis aims to identify sharp differences between them (Chesterman 1998). This analysis aims to identify differences in translation data across these editions, allowing researchers to draw conclusions regarding the political stance of the translators in these editions. This is achieved by analysing the choice of vocabulary used to translate the collocation phrase *ittahāza awliya* in the source text (ST), particularly the use of the word 'pemimpin' [leader] to translate 'awliya' and the word 'menjadikan' [to make] to translate 'ittahāza'. Researchers consider that the choice of diction in these translations reflects the political ideology of the Indonesian government, represented by MoRA. This perspective is rooted in translation theory as a political act, as proposed by Alvares and Vidal (1996) and Hatfield (2012); and that translation is a political act within social movements, and translations can also play a political role (Capan, Reis & Grasten 2021; Cassin 2018).

Results and discussions

Ittahāza awliya collocation translation problem

The phrase *ittahāza awliya* is verbs plus objects collocation, namely the transitive verb to two objects. The verb *ittahāza* in the collocation of *ittahāza awliya* and the noun *awliya* (the second object) play an essential role in the translation of verses containing the rejection or prohibition of non-Muslims as leaders. There are three arrangement types of collocation: (1) adjectives plus nouns, (2) nouns plus nouns and (3) verbs plus objects that are usually nouns indicating action (Newmark 1998). Based on data collected from the Qur'an, the Table 1 describes the collocation structure in this study.

Based on the collocation of *ittahāza awliya* collected from the corpus of the Qur'an, the first object in the collocation is the noun, which includes: pagans (*al-Kāfirīn*), Jews and Christians, demons, devils, enemies, parents and brothers and servants other than Allah. The variety of the first object in this collocation adds to the problem of finding an equivalent and consistent translation word for the collocation of *ittahāza awliya*. As Newmark (1988) explained, the issue in collocation translation represents a translation unit problem larger than that of words. This problem has similarities with the problem of translating phrases and clauses. This is especially true if this first object is closely related to the context of the verse in which the collocation

TABLE 1: Grammatical structure.

Predicate	Subject	Object 1	Object 2
<i>Ittahāza</i>	...	<i>Al-Kāfirīn / Ghair Allah</i>	<i>Awliya</i>
اتخذ	...	غير الله / الكافرين	أولياء

was found. Therefore, it is vital to pay attention to the purpose of a translation. It is the context factor that has so far influenced translation a lot. The translators must be aware of whether the results of the collocation translation are commonplace, natural or accepted in the target text (TT) arrangement.

The translation of the collocation of *ittahāza awliya* in the Indonesian translations of the Qur'an detects the problem of translation explained by Newmark above. Likewise, the translation of the Qur'an into other languages, Malaysian for example, also shows various translations of the phrase *ittahāza awliya*. In the Malaysian translation of the Qur'an, the phrase *ittahāza awliya* is translated with several different phrases, namely: *mengambil menjadi teman rapat* [take to be close friend], *penolong* [helper], *menjadikan orang yang didampingi* [make the person accompanied], *pemimpin* [leader] and *pelindung* [protector]. This shows that the phrase *ittahāza awliya* in the Qur'an is not easy to translate consistently in Malaysian (Nazrol 2023). Even more than that, in Arabic itself which is the language of the Qur'an, the collocation phrase *ittahāza awliya* in the Qur'an is also interpreted with several phrases, which include *ja'ala nashira* [make helper], *dzu wilayah* [owner of power], *hulafa* [allies], *ma'budat* [deities], *syuraka* [allies] and *mu'in* [helper] [Al-Maraghi 1990; Al-Thanthawi 2001].

The discourse of interpretation of the Qur'an also causes differences among translators who rely on exegesis to understand certain expressions of the Qur'an. Abdul-Raof (2006) explains that translators of the Qur'an are very likely to provide different translations because of semantic ambiguity. Finding a word equivalent to that fits the TT is difficult. The problem of translation becomes problematic because it also relates to lexical ambiguity. In addition to translating using lexical meanings, translating collocation also needs the linguistic context that shapes words so that they become words that have a new concept (Newmark 1988).

Based on the interpretation and the first object of the word *ittahāza*, researchers grouped verses containing the collocation of *ittahāza awliya* into two contexts, namely: (1) the context of divinity or *tawhid*, that is, when the first object is 'other than Allah' (Satan, devil and others) and (2) the context of government or politics, that is when the first object is non-Muslim (including hypocrite, father and brother, enemies). Table 2 provides the name of the letter and the number of verses containing the collocation of *ittahāza awliya* in the corpus of the Qur'an.

TABLE 2: Context of collocation *ittahāza awliya*.

No	Context	Chapter and verse number
1	Government and politics	Ali Imran: 28; An-Nisa: 89; An-Nisa: 139; An-Nisa: 144; Al-Maidah: 51; Al-Maidah: 57; Al-Maidah: 81; At-Taubah: 23; al-Mumtahanah: 1
2	Divinity and <i>tawhid</i>	Al-A'raf: 30; Ar-Ra'd: 16; Al-Kahfi: 50; Al-Kahfi: 102; Al-Furqan: 18; Al-Ankabut: 41; Al-Zumar: 3; Al-Shura: 6; Al-Shura: 9; Al-Jatsiyah: 10

No, number.

TABLE 3: Different words used to translate the word *awliya*.

No	Surah: Verse	Translation	Edition
1	Ali Imran: 28 لَا يَتَّخِذِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ	Janganlah orang-orang mukmin mengambil orang-orang kafir menjadi wali (untranslated word)	1990, 1965, 2019
2		Janganlah orang-orang beriman menjadikan orang kafir sebagai pemimpin (leader)	2002
3	Al-Maidah: 81 مَا اتَّخَذُوهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءَ	niscaya mereka tidak akan mengambil orang-orang musyrikin itu menjadi penolong (helper)	1965, 1990
4		niscaya mereka tidak akan menjadikan orang musyrik itu sebagai teman setia (loyal friend)	2002
5		Niscaya mereka tidak akan menjadikan orang musyrik itu sebagai sekutu (ally)	2019
6	Al-Jatsiyah: 10 وَلَا مَا اتَّخَذُوا مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ أَوْلِيَاءَ	dan tidak pula (bermanfaat) apa yang mereka jadikan sebagai pelindung-pelindung (mereka) selain Allah (protectors)	2002
7		dan tidak (pula bermanfaat) apa yang mereka jadikan sebagai sesembahan selain Allah (worshipped ones)	2019, 1965, 1990

Source: MoRA, Ministry of Religious Affairs, 1965, *Terjemah al-Quran al-Karim versi I (I)*, Penerbit Kementerian Agama RI, Jakarta; MoRA, Ministry of Religious Affairs, 1990, *Al-Quran dan Terjemahnya*, Mujamma' Malik Fahd, Saudi Arabiyah; MoRA, Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2002, *Al-Quran dan Terjemahnya*, Lintas Media, Jakarta; MoRA, Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2019, *Terjemah al-Quran al-Karim*, Penerbit Kementerian Agama RI, Jakarta.

In the first context, the word *awliya* generally is interpreted as a helper, while in the second context, it generally is interpreted as worshipped things or Gods (Al-Maraghi 1990; Al-Thanthawi 2001). There are 9 verses in the political context and 10 verses in the context of divinity or *tawhid*. The word *awliya* in the context of government or politics is interpreted as a helper, that is, a helper allied with promoting Islam. In divinity, the word *awliya* is interpreted as worshipped things that will help them or Gods whom they make as Gods replace Allah.

Researchers found that in all editions of the official translation of the Qur'an of MoRA, the influence of the ST is still very apparent. It affects the translation of the collocation of *ittahaza awliya*. In all the editions, researchers have found that the word '*ittahaza*' in that phrase is consistently translated as 'taking' or 'took' with the word *mengambil* [take]. The influence of the ST causes a lack of naturalness in the TT. That is because the word '*penolong*' [helper] or '*pelindung*' [protector] in Indonesian is a sensible or willed noun, thus it is not natural to collocate with the word '*mengambil*' [take] where the word '*mengambil*' [take] is identical in collocation with the inanimate or non-willed nouns. In *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* [KBBI, the Great Dictionary of Indonesian], the general meaning of the word '*mengambil*' [take] is to hold something and then carry it (lift, use, store and so on). However, there is also the phrase '*mengambil anak*' [taking as a child], which means to make it as an adopted child, but this use is less natural than the previous use (Bahasa 2016). Thus, there is interference in the translation affected by the ST. In the ST, the word *ittahaza* comes from the word *ahaza*, which in Indonesian is *mengambil* [take].

This interference occurred 43 times spread across four editions of the Qur'an translation, namely the 1965 edition, which experienced the most interference (i.e., 16 times), the 1990 edition (15 times), the 2002 edition (7 times) and the latest 2019 edition (5 times). An interesting finding from this study is that interference is decreasing from the edition to the others, from the first edition in 1965 to the second edition in 1990 and then to the latest edition in 2019. Although there are still five interferences in the translation of the *ittahaza awliya* collocation in the latest edition, researchers suggest that these interferences must be eliminated in the next edition. Interference is also noticeable in translation editions that combine two words *mengambil* [take] and *menjadi* [to be] as

the translation of the word *ittahaza*, *mengambil ... menjadi* [takes ... to be]. For example, see the combination of the two words to translate the word *ittahaza*:

لَا يَتَّخِذِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ الْكَافِرِينَ أَوْلِيَاءَ

Janganlah orang-orang mukmin mengambil orang-orang kafir menjadi wali.

Do not believers take unbelievers to be *wali* Q. An-Nisa' [4:144].

This translation is from the 1990 edition and the translation '*mengambil hamba-hamba-Ku menjadi penolong* [taking Myservants to be helpers]' in Q. al-Kahfi [5:102] from the 1965, 1990, 2002, and 2019 editions. The combining of the word *mengambil* [take] and the word *menjadi* [to be] as a translation of *ittahaza* occurs in almost all collocations of *ittahaza awliya* translations of the 1965 edition. This manner of translation is a free translation strategy in which one of the two words has no equivalent in the original text (ST). This is in line with what was conveyed by Faris and Sahu (2013) that the free translation strategy can be taken as a solution strategy in collocation translation. Thus, this is in contrast to *metode setia* [faithful method] mentioned by the translation team in the introduction of all editions.

Based on the context and interpretations of the verses in Table 3 of this study, the harmony or concordance translation of the collocation of *ittahaza awliya* is a pseudo concordance where the translation of the word *awliya* can mean 'helper', 'worshipped ones' and so on. This is because there are seven different words used to translate the word *awliya*, namely *wali* [untranslated word], *penolong* [helper], *teman* [friend], *pemimpin* [leader], *pelindung* [protector], *sembahan* [worshipped ones] and *sekutu* [ally].

In all Indonesian translation editions, the collocation of *ittahaza awliya* is translated inconsistently, either the word *awliya* in the context of 'politics' or the word *awliya* in the context of 'divinity'. Regarding the 2019 edition, the consistency of translating *ittahaza awliya*, which is one of the points of concern of this translation team, has not been seen, although this edition is more consistent than previous editions, mainly while translating the word *ittahaza*. In the 2019 edition, the word *ittahaza* is only five times translated

TABLE 4: Translation of *awliya* in each edition.

No	Edition	Translation
1	1965 and 1990	(1) <i>wali</i> [untranslated word], (2) <i>penolong</i> [helpers], (3) <i>teman</i> [friends], (4) <i>pelindung</i> [protectors], (5) <i>pemimpin</i> [leaders], (6) <i>sembahan</i> [worshipped ones]
2	2002	(1) <i>penolong</i> [helpers], (2) <i>teman</i> [friends], (3) <i>pemimpin</i> [leaders], (4) <i>pelindung</i> [protectors]
3	2019	(1) <i>wali</i> [untranslated word], (2) <i>teman</i> [friends], (3) <i>pelindung</i> [protectors], (4) <i>sekutu</i> [ally], (5) <i>penolong</i> [helpers], (6) <i>sembahan</i> [worshipped ones].

Source: MoRA, Ministry of Religious Affairs, 1965, *Terjemah al-Quran al-Karim versi 1 (I)*, Penerbit Kementerian Agama RI, Jakarta; MoRA, Ministry of Religious Affairs, 1990, *Al-Quran dan Terjemahnya*, 'Mujamma' Malik Fahd, Saudi Arabiyah; MoRA, Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2002, *Al-Quran dan Terjemahnya*, Lintas Media, Jakarta; MoRA, Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2019, *Terjemah al-Quran al-Karim*, Penerbit Kementerian Agama RI, Jakarta.

Note: Please see the full reference list of the article, Faizin, N., Arifianto, M.L., Fauzi, M.F. & Mahliatussikhah, H., 2024, 'The translation of *ittahaza awliya* and the rights of non-Muslims as leaders in Indonesia', *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* 80(1), a9488. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v80i1.9488>, for more information.

into *mengambil* [take], namely in Al-Kahfi [18:102], Al-Furqan [25:18], Al-Ankabut [29:41], Al-Zumar [39:3], Al-Shura [42:6] and [42:9], whereas in other editions, the word is mostly still translated as '*mengambil*', even '*mengambil ... menjadi*'.

Comparison of translation editions and political stances of the translators

Comparing these editions of the Indonesian translation of the Qur'an shows that the word *awliya* in the 1965 and 1990 editions (see Table 4) was translated using six words, namely *wali* [untranslated word], *penolong* [helpers], *teman* [friends], *pelindung* [protectors], *pemimpin* [leaders] and *sembahan* [worshipped ones]. The word *awliya* in the 2002 edition was translated using four words, that is *penolong* [helpers], *teman* [friends], *pemimpin* [leaders] and *pelindung* [protectors] and was translated in the 2019 edition using six words, that is *wali* [untranslated word], *teman* [friends], *pelindung* [protectors], *sekutu* [ally], *penolong* [helpers] and *sembahan* [worshipped ones].

Meanwhile, the word *ittahaza* in each edition was translated using two translations, namely *menjadikan* [make] and *mengambil* [take], and the 1990 edition used both words [*mengambil* [take] and *menjadikan* [make] simultaneously].

Based on the collocation translation data and the ambiguity of the lexical meaning of the word *awliya*, researchers find that the differences in the editions are because of the political factors of the translators who translated the Qur'an. In this case, it is the political direction of government represented by MoRA in each era of leadership. In addition, this research also finds that the seven words used as translations of the word *awliya* are also used by the translation editions inconsistently or differently in each translation edition according to the direction of the politics in each era of government.

TABLE 5: Translate *pemimpin* [leader] in 4 translation editions.

Version	Translation	Chapter: Verse
1965 Edition	<i>Pemimpin</i> [Leader]	Al-Maidah: 51; Al-Maidah: 57; At-Taubah: 23; Al-Kahfi: 50
1990 Edition	Leader	Al-Maidah: 51; Al-Mi'adah: 57; Al-Kahfi: 50
2002 Edition	Leader	Ali Imran: 28; An-Nisa: 139; An-Nisa: 144; Al-Mi'adah: 57; Al-Kahfi: 50
2019 Edition	Leader	–

The use of the word 'leader' in the translation of the word '*awliya*' tends to create an understanding that explicitly prohibits Muslims from electing or appointing non-Muslims as their leaders, unlike other words used as translations for '*awliya*', which tend not to directly and explicitly convey the prohibition of choosing or appointing leaders. There is another interesting finding of this research. In the translation of the 2019 edition, none of the word *awliya* was translated using the word *pemimpin* [leader], while in the translation editions of the 2002 and 1990, the word *awliya* was translated using the word *pemimpin* [leader] many times; five times in the 2002 edition and three times in the 1990 edition. Table 5 provides details of each edition using the word *pemimpin* [leader] as the translation of the word *awliya*.

It can be seen from Table 5 that the first, second, third edition, which have been published from the Soekarno era until the reform era, namely from 1965 to 2002, the collocation of *ittahaza awliya* in several verses was translated using the word *pemimpin* [leader] in the translation edition of the Qur'an, which means that these verses prohibit making non-Muslims (the first object in the collocation structure) as leaders. While in the 2019 translation edition, none of the words *awliya* was translated as the word *pemimpin* [leader]. This translation suggests that the demonstrations against Ahok in 2016 have turned out to have an impact on the translation of the last edition of the Qur'an in 2019. On the other hand, through this case, the team of the 2019 edition intentionally avoided using the word '*pemimpin*' [leader] as a translation for the word '*awliya*' to prevent any demonstrations similar to the anti-Ahok protests in 2016 from happening again, and the team wants to declare that there is no longer an understanding that prohibits non-Muslims as leaders with the legitimacy of the Quranic verse because this rejection is contrary to the democratic system and freedom in Indonesia regarding the right of citizens to be elected leaders only based on their non-Muslim religion.

In the first edition (1965 edition), in which the Islamic organisation Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) was an instrumental translator in this translation; it is entirely understood that the translation team translated the collocation of the verses using *mengambil* [take] or *mengambil ... jadi pemimpin* [take ... to be a leader] because of the decision of the NU Congress in Lirboyo in 1999, which had decided that non-Muslims should not be leaders for Muslims. Until this Congress, the notoriously moderate NU organisation had argued for a ban on legalising state affairs to non-Muslims except in emergencies. This decision of the 1999 NU Congress only changed with the issuance of the decision *Bahstul Masail Kiai Muda GP Ansor* (Legal Discussion of NU institution) held in 2017, which

resulted in the decision that choosing non-Muslim leaders in Indonesia is valid according to the perspective of Islam and the Indonesian constitution (Bahri 2018).

In the field of Quranic interpretation, the Muslim *Mufasssir* [commentators] of the classical and modern eras can be categorised into two groups, namely the group that prohibits non-Muslim leadership and the group that allows it. Zakariya (2018) concluded that the Indonesian people's interpretation of al-Maidah [5:51] was very diverse; those who strictly forbid leadership of non-Muslim leaders and those who allow it unconditionally. Rodin (2017) said the interpretation that allows non-Muslims as leaders was an interpretation that Indonesian Muslims widely accept until now. In the case of Ahok's candidacy as governor of DKI Jakarta in 2016, Ahok made a mistake because he said that Muslims were deceived by al-Maidah [5:51]. This statement resulted in Ahok's imprisonment for 2 years for insulting Islam (Mujani 2019). This sentencing decision is not only contrary to the interpretation of most Muslim groups but also not in line with the decision of *Bahtsul Masail Kyai Muda GP Ansor* (Legal Discussion of NU institution) NU.

In the second edition (1990 edition), where the Indonesian government cooperated with the Government of Saudi Arabia in publishing the translation of the official Qur'an, the use of the word *mengambil* [take] or *menjadikan pemimpin* [make a leader] was still used mainly in verses that have a political and governmental context. This finding is understandable because Saudi Arabia is an Islamic kingdom that forbids non-Muslims to be a king or a leader in its system of government. Meanwhile, in the third edition of 2002, published in the reform era, the translation team also continued to use the translation *menjadikan ... pemimpin* [making ... leader] as a translation of this collocation to imply the forbidding.

By contrasting the first three editions, it can be observed that the translation of 'awliya' as 'pemimpin' [leader] is predominantly found in the 2002 translation edition, occurring a total of five times, four times in verses with political context and in one verse whose context is divinity. This use is because the political situation after the resignation of President Suharto in 1998 opened up enormous freedom to all elements of society. The reform era provides freedom of speech, including freedom in politics. One of those who enjoy the freedom is Muslim groups; in the first election after Suharto's resignation, there were at least more than 17 political parties with Islamic backgrounds. All political parties were vying for election contestation, including Muslim parties, such as PKB (*Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa*) National Awakening Party, PPP (*Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*) United Development Party, PKS (*Partai Keadilan Sejahtera*) Prosperous Justice Party and PBB (*Partai Bulan Bintang*) Crescent Star Party (Lili Romli 2004). Thus, this political condition indeed influenced the selection of diction in the translation of the Qur'an in the 2002 edition.

In general, although the translation editions of the Qur'an from 1965 to 2002 did not use the word *pemimpin* [leader] as a translation of the word *awliya* in all verses whose context was political and although the first three editions only agreed together to translate the word *awliya* with the word leader [leader] in just one verse, namely al-Maidah [5:57], this research, however, finds that the use of the word *pemimpin* [leader] as a translation of the word *awliya* in the verses that have a political context is a political act of Muslims that is very clear to obtain and affirm their political right to be a leader in Indonesia; it is a special right for them. In other words, translating those verses with a political context becomes one of the tools to gain the support of Muslims and prevent Muslims from choosing and appointing non-Muslims to be leaders. For this purpose, the word *pemimpin* [leader] is often used in translation throughout the history of the Qur'an translation in Indonesia, which means that the verses expressly prohibit Muslims from appointing non-Muslim leaders in government.

Conclusion

Interference in the translation of the collocation *ittahaza awliya* in the official Indonesian translations of the Qur'an issued by MoRA RI arises because of translation problems, particularly the influence of the ST, which remains prominent in the first edition and diminishes progressively in the latest edition. In addition, the ambiguous lexical meaning of the word *awliya* also adds to the translation problem. It can also be concluded that the motives and political direction of government are closely related to the difference in translation and even significantly affect the translation of the collocation.

Translation of the Qur'an in Indonesian from the Soekarno era to the Suharto era still opens opportunities for non-Muslims to become leaders. This conclusion can be referenced from the emergence of some translations of *ittahaza awliya* collocation in verses with a political context translated into *menjadikan teman dekat* [making close friends] or translated with keeping the original language *menjadikan wali* [make a wali]. Ironically, during the reform era, which was supposed to uphold political freedom for all Indonesian citizens, the translation of the collocation *ittahaza awliya* was more frequently employed to obstruct non-Muslims from becoming leaders. This was evident in the prevalence of the term 'pemimpin' [leader] as a translation for the word 'awliya'. During the reform period, political freedom should get great attention and a free place.

In the 2019 edition, conducted after the demonstration of Ahok's rejection in 2016, the research did not find any collocation *ittahaza awliya* translated into *jangan menjadikan ... pemimpin* [do not make ... leader]. In 2019 edition, the translation of the word *pemimpin* [leader] only appears in the footnote as an explanation of the possible meaning, and the word *pemimpin* [leader] is mentioned lastly after other words. Thus, it can be concluded that after the demonstrations in late 2016, the Indonesian government felt the need to affirm

and strengthen democracy and the constitution that grants political rights to all its citizens regardless of their religion through a more democratic interpretation. The government's stance on the translation was a response to the real conditions of Indonesian society that experienced a decline in democracy characterised by the emergence of Islamic populism such as the case of massive demonstrations against Ahok's candidacy as Jakarta's gubernatorial candidate. Thus, this research, in addition to showing the Indonesian government's stance on the political rights of non-Muslims to become leaders, also reinforces the finding of previous research that shows the decline of democracy and the rise of Islamic populism in Indonesia.

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Authors' contributions

N.F., the corresponding author, contributed to the preparation of research concepts and methods. M.L.A. and M.F.F. conducted the formal analysis. H.M. contributed to the drafting and was the supervisor.

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Data availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, N.F., upon reasonable request.

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